

REMARKS

Receipt of the Office Action mailed October 27, 2009 is hereby acknowledged.

Amendments

Applicants have amended claims 11 and 20 to recite that the claimed methods "consist essentially of" the recited steps. No new matter has been added.

Prior Art Rejections

The Examiner has maintained the rejection of claims 11-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Madsen, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0037943 ("Madsen") in view of Hunter, et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0043052 ("Hunter"). Applicants traverse.

As discussed in detail in the last response, Madsen discloses a multi-step process for coating a catheter with a two-layer crosslinked, hydrophilic polymer coating. The catheter is dipped in a solvent mixture of PVP, or a mixture of hydrophilic polymers and additives, and then exposed to UV light (i.e. irradiated and cured) so as to crosslink the polymers on the surface. The coatings are then dried. The catheters are then

further processed by being placed in a second wetting solution containing PVP, and sterilized (by irradiation or autoclaving) while stored in this solution. Thus, Madsen discloses a multi-step process in which there must be at least two irradiation steps or an irradiation step and an autoclaving step.

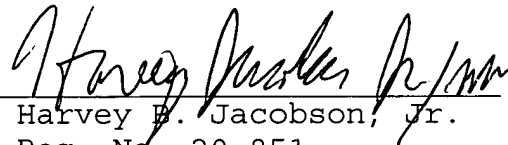
By contrast, the presently claimed invention consists essentially of the recited steps, and thereby excludes a second irradiation step or an autoclaving step, at least one of which is required by Madsen. Nothing in Madsen teaches or suggests that both of these steps could or should be eliminated. Nor does Hunter cure this deficiency. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the obviousness rejection should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants submit that the claims are now in condition for allowance. Prompt notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes a telephone call would advance prosecution of the application, he is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

JACOBSON HOLMAN PLLC

By 
Harvey E. Jacobson, Jr.
Reg. No. 20,851

400 Seventh Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-2201
(202) 638-6666
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